[Translation]

Bhopal Gas Tragedy

712. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of claims of compensation settled out of six lakhs cases of claims filed and the number of pending cases out of them and the time by which these pending claims would be settled;

(b) whether some of the claims related to Bhopal Gas Tragedy had been settled by Lok Adalats whereas there is no provision in Central Act for the Constitution of Lok Adalatas and disposal of the claims;

(c) whether keeping this in view all the cases will be taken up once again;

(d) whether there is any provision in the Central Act for giving new claims as no fresh claims have been invited by Lok Adalats and provisions of the Act have not been adhered to; and

(e) if so, the time by which work related to inviting fresh claims will be taken up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) According to information received from the Office of Welfare Commissioner, who is a sitting Judge of High Court, compensation Claims of about 4 lakh cases have been decided by the Courts set up under the provisions of Bhopal Gas Disaster (Processing of Claims) Act, 1985 and another about 1.20 lakh cases are expected to be decided by March, 1997 and the adjudication of the remaining cases will be taken up thereafter.

(b) and (c). The Welfare Commissioner has informed that as the Act does not debar the decision of claims cases through forum of Lok Adalats, only those are taken up for disposal through Lok Adalats for which the claimants give their consent.

(d) and (e). Notification under Section 4 of the Act inviting fresh claims from those victims who had not filed their claims earlier is expected to be issued by the Welfare Commissioner in the near future.

Inter-State Council

713. SHRI LALIT ORAON : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering reconstitution of the inter-State Council;

(b) if so, whether the guidelines given by the Sarkaria Commission in regard to Centre-State relations under the federal system are to be followed;

(c) whether the financial and administrative relations between the Centre and States and the role of the Governors will be clearly defined; and

(d) if so, the time by which?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MOQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (d) There is no proposal for the reconstitution of the Inter-State Council. However, in the second meeting of the Inter-State Council held on 15th October, 1996, the Council recommended that there should be a Standing Committee of the Council for continuous consultations and processing of matters for the consideration of the Council. The Standing Committee will consider -

(i) Views of the State Governments on any matter of relevance to the Centre-State relations including the 179 recommendations finalised by the Sub-Committee in view of the reservations expressed by some of the Chief Ministers during the second meeting of the Inter-State Council held on 15th October, 1996;

(ii) Examine the continuance/amendment of article 356 of the Constitution of India upon past experience and judicia pronouncements; and

(iii) review and update the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission, especially the vita question of devolution of financial powers from the Central Government to the state governments.

The Standing Committee will be required to give its report within three months and the same will be considered by the Council. The recommendations of the Inter-State Council will be sent to the Government thereafter for consideration and a final decision.

[English]

Production of Cereals/Pulses

714. SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the per acre yield of cereals and pulses in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether this yield has been up to the international Standards;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to boost the production upto the international standards?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) A statement giving per hectare yield of cereals and, pulses-State-wise for 1994-95 is enclosed.